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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/817,588	04/02/2004	Ryoichiro Uehara	114216-011	4919

7590 04/19/2005
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EXAMINER

RODRIGUEZ, RUTH C

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3677

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/817,588	Applicant(s) UEHARA ET AL.	
	Examiner Ruth C Rodriguez	Art Unit 3677	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 April 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 02 April 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/2/04 and 11/8/04.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statements filed 02 April 2005 and 08 November 2005 have been considered for this Office Action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Document JP 2000166616 (JP '616).

A buckle (1,11) comprises a socket (1), a plug (11) and a bridge (18). The plug has a tip end (right side of plug shown in Figs. 5, 7, 9 and 10) to be inserted to the

socket and to be released from the socket by pressing from both sides of the socket (Fig. 8). The plug having a base (12) formed on a base end. At least a pair of lock arms (15,16) extends from the base to the tip end of the plug. An engaging part (leftmost end of 15) is formed on a part of the lock arm to be engageable with the socket (Fig. 8). A pressing part (outermost part of 15) is disposed at a part of the lock arm to be pressed when the socket is release (Fig. 8). The bridge connects the parts of at least the pair of lock arms (Fig. 5 and 8-10).

Both ends of the bridge are connected to the lock arms and a central part of the bridge is located on the side of the tip end of the plug relative to the both ends (Fig. 8).

Both ends of the bridge are located on the side of the base end of the plug relative to the pressing part and the central part of the bridge is located on the side of the tip end of the plug relative to the pressing part (Fig. 8).

The bridge is approximately V-shaped bent at the central part (V-shaped interior of 18a shown in Fig. 10).

The center angle of the approximately V-shape is 90 degrees or less (Fig. 10).

A buckle (1,11) comprises a socket (1), a plug (11) and a bridge (18). The plug has a tip end (right side of plug shown in Figs. 5, 7, 9 and 10) to be inserted to the socket and to be released from the socket by pressing from both sides of the socket (Fig. 8). The plug has a base (12) formed on a base end. At least a pair of lock arms (15,16) extending from the base to the tip end of the plug. At least one guide bar (19) is disposed between the lock arms. An engaging part (leftmost end of 15) is formed on a part of the lock arm to be engageable with the socket (Fig. 8). A pressing part

Art Unit: 3677

(outermost part of 15) is disposed at a part of the lock arm to be pressed when the socket is released (Fig. 8). The bridge connects the parts of at least the pair of lock arms and extends around a tip end of the guide bar (Figs. 5 and 9).

The tip end of the guide bar is located on the side of the tip end of the plug relative to the both ends of the bridge and the bridge extending around the tip end of the guide bar at the central part thereof (Figs. 5 and 9).

5. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Chao (US 2003/0145439 A1).

A buckle (2) comprises a socket (21), a plug (22) and a bridge (between 221). The plug has a tip end to be inserted to the socket and to be released from the socket by pressing from both sides of the socket (Fig. 8). The plug having a base formed on a base end (Fig. 8). At least a pair of lock arms extends from the base to the tip end of the plug (Fig. 8). An engaging part (ends of 221) is formed on a part of the lock arm to be engageable with the socket (Fig. 8). A pressing part (center of 221) is disposed at a part of the lock arm to be pressed when the socket is release (Fig. 8). The bridge connects the parts of at least the pair of lock arms (Fig. 8).

Both ends of the bridge are connected to the lock arms and a central part of the bridge is located on the side of the tip end of the plug relative to the both ends (Fig. 8).

The bridge is approximately V-shaped bent at the central part (Fig. 8).

The center angle of the approximately V-shape is 90 degrees or less (Fig. 8).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Kasai (US 4,672,725), Saitou et al. (US 5,806,152), Anscher (US 6,311,374), Van Tassel (US 6,487,761) and Japanese Patent Document 06125803 A are cited to show state of the art with respect to a plug with a bridge connecting two locking arms.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth C Rodriguez whose telephone number is (571) 272-7070. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 07:15 - 15:45.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J. J. Swann can be reached on (571) 272-7075.

Submissions of your responses by facsimile transmission are encouraged. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306. Recognizing the fact that reducing cycle time in the processing and examination of patent applications will effectively increase the patent's term, it is to your benefit to submit responses by facsimile transmission whenever permissible. Such submission will place the response directly in our examining group's hands and will eliminate Post Office processing and delivery time as well as PTO's mailroom processing and delivery time. For a complete list of correspondence **not** permitted by facsimile transmission, see MPEP § 502.01. In general, most responses and/or amendments not requiring a fee, as well as those requiring a fee but charging such fee

Art Unit: 3677

to a deposit account, can be submitted by facsimile transmission. Responses requiring a fee that the applicant is paying by check **should not be** submitted by facsimile transmission separately from the check.

Responses submitted by facsimile transmission should include a Certificate of Transmission (MPEP § 512). The following is an example of the format the certification might take:

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to
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(Typed or printed name of person signing this certificate)

(Signature)

If your response is submitted by facsimile transmission, you are hereby reminded that the original should be retained as evidence of authenticity (37 CFR 1.4 and MPEP § 502.02). Please do not separately mail the original or another copy unless required by the Patent and Trademark Office. Submission of the original response or a follow-up copy of the response has been transmitted by facsimile will cause further unnecessary delays in the processing of your application, duplicate responses where fees are charged to a deposit account may result in those fees being charged twice.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-6640.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for

Art Unit: 3677


published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should

you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Ruth C. Rodriguez
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3677

rcr

April 12, 2005